DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 398 956 JC 960 457

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TITLE The Academic Computing, Tutoring, and Testing (ACTT) Center Survey--Spring 1996.
INSTITUTION Gainesville Coll., GA. Office of Planning and Institutional Research.
PUB DATE Jul 96
NOTE 22p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Community Colleges; *Computer Centers; Learning Laboratories; *Learning Resources Centers; *Participant Satisfaction; Program Effectiveness; School Surveys; *Student Attitudes; *Teacher Attitudes; Two Year Colleges; Use Studies
IDENTIFIERS *Gainesville College GA

ABSTRACT

As part of an effort to evaluate the Academic Computing, Tutoring, and Testing Center, Gainesville College, in Georgia, surveyed 672 students in morning classes, 424 students in evening classes, and all faculty and staff to determine their use of and satisfaction with the Center. Faculty and staff responses were received from 79 individuals, including 50 faculty members, 11 administrative, and 18 staff members. Study findings included the following: (1) 50% of the student respondents spent 1 to 5 hours in the Center each week, while 8.7% indicated that they had never used it; (2) the most commonly reported use of the Center by students was for classroom assignments requiring the use of a computer, cited by 759 respondents; (3) all 38 dimensions of the Center included on the survey received ratings of "adequate" or "very adequate" by 84% or more of the students, while the highest rated dimensions were computer hardware and software; (4) the dimensions receiving the highest percentage of "very adequate" ratings by faculty were willingness to offer orientation classes, hours of operation, willingness of staff to discuss problems, and willingness to help special needs students; and (5) the dimensions receiving the lowest number of "very adequate" ratings by faculty were the condition of the photocopy equipment, the amount of staff, and the availability of professional staff. The survey instruments with tabulated responses and student comments to open-ended questions are included. (TGI)

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ED 398 956

The Academic Computing, Tutoring, and Testing (ACTT) Center Survey - Spring 1996

Dr. Hamilton
OPIR, Gainesville College
July 1996

Introduction

The Academic Computing, Tutoring, and Testing (ACTT) Center was established with funding from the Georgia lottery in January, 1995. It is centrally located in Academic III. The Center provides an environment conducive to individual and group studying and access to 110 computers with printer hook-ups that are connected to GC Net. The Center also furnishes tutorial assistance from peers, faculty, and staff in a variety of subjects, provides remediation for the Regents' Test, and serves as a secure site for the administration of make-up tests. The networked computers provide a convenient and user-friendly route to an extensive bank of software, including library databases, tutorial programs, mathematics applications, biology simulations, word processing, and data management programs.

The Center is home to five unique laboratories: Business, Mathematics, Speech, Writing, and Foreign Language. In the past these learning labs were dispersed into separate locations across campus. Consolidating the labs into a central location helped resolve several difficult problems including keeping up with new equipment purchases at several sites, duplication of effort, efficient use of limited personnel, and the need to extend the hours of student access to tutoring help, computer workstations, and make-up testing. Another feature of the ACTT Center is a multi-media room with 7 TV/VCRs where students view videos or listen to audio cassettes required by their coursework. In addition, instructors make study materials available to students on a reserved or check-out basis.

The ACTT Center is open weekday evenings, weekend afternoons, as well as regular weekday hours for a total of 79 hours per week. Specific labs are staffed with full-time professionals or peer tutors and are open during the weekdays from 7:30 until 5 or 6 PM. Professional staff and student tutors are available at the main desk on weekday evenings and weekends.[1]

I would like to extend a special thanks to Byron Drew and Judy Forbes for their help in preparing this document.

[1]Gainesville College 1995-97 Catalog.

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Student Survey - Spring 1996

The Academic Computing, Tutoring, and Testing (ACTT) Center

Respondent Profile

The 1996 ACTT Center Survey sampled 1096 students in 10 AM (n=672) and 6 PM (n=424) classes during the spring quarter. The survey sample size represents 43 percent of the total College census for spring quarter (N=2546). Most of the respondents were female (63%), attended during the daytime (60%), and were 24 years of age or less (75%). Slightly fewer than nine percent (8.7, n=94) of the almost 1100 respondents indicated they never used the ACTT Center. Of the 94 students who never used the Center, a sampling of reasons include "my first quarter here," "have not needed it yet, but probably will," and "I use the library."

Hours per Week and Time Period of Greatest Use

One out of every two respondents spent 1 to 5 hours in the ACTT Center each week, whereas 40 percent spent less than one hour. Fewer students spent 6 to 10 hours per week (7%) or more than 10 (3%). Clearly, student activity associated with the Center (over 90%) represents a huge investment of student time into the academic life of the campus.

The first question concerning the time of usage asked student to *check any or all* of the periods that they used the ACTT Center, thus the same student could be counted in several time blocks. Under these conditions it is not possible to tally a total to calculate percentages. Instead, the number of respondents who indicated usage of a specific time period is shown parenthetically rather than as a percentage. A rough estimate of the percentage of the total who use the Center during a given time period can be calculated by dividing the 'n' value by 1000 (approximate number of surveyed students who used the Center, 1096 - 94). These percentages, if calculated for each time period, are not mutually exclusive, hence would not sum to 100. This type of survey dimension, where students are asked to respond to all the options that apply, occurs again for usage of the Center in the next section.

Since most of those in the survey were daytime students (60%) and the majority of class offerings at the College are during weekday mornings, it is not surprising that the highest usage period for the ACTT Center was from 8 AM to 1 PM during the weekdays (n=605) with the 4 PM to 8 PM weekday time period coming in second (n=316) and 1 PM to 4 PM a close third (n=276). Significantly, there was not a time period on the survey that did not receive reasonably heavy usage: before 8 AM (n=108), after 8 PM on weekdays (n=180), Saturday from 12 N to 6 PM (n=217), and Sunday from 1 PM to 7 PM (n=42).

When students were next asked to choose the *one time frame* that they used the Center most frequently, 51 percent responded 8 AM to 1 PM while another 17 percent indicated 4 PM to 8 PM. Interestingly, 12 percent of the respondents primarily used the Center during hours outside of traditional class times: Before 8 AM (3%), after 8 PM weekdays (8%), and on Saturday (12-6 PM, 4%) and Sunday (1-7 PM, 4%). Another eight percent indicated that they primarily used the Center after 8 PM on weekdays.

The data indicate that a steady and heavy stream of students permeates the Center for a 12-hour stretch from 8 AM until 8 PM during the weekdays with especially dense traffic on

weekday mornings. Clearly the morning and early evening hours are peak usage periods that must be taken into account when planning decisions are made so as to adequately accommodate student demand for services. Nevertheless, students move into and out of the Center during all of the open times which supports any efforts by the Center to maintain or even expand its hours of operation.

Uses of the Center

When students were asked to check *all the listed uses* of the ACTT Center that they took advantage of the largest number of students (n=759) reported using the ACTT Center for classroom assignments requiring a computer with general studying coming in second (n=569). Many students also visit the ACTT Center for personal use of a computer (n=471) and testing and makeup work (n=468). Other reasons for using the ACTT Center include assignments that require ACTT Center material (n=310) and tutorial assistance (n=293). Some students (n=48) use the Center for remediation of the Regents' exam. Other reasons for using the ACTT Center that were written in as comments on an open-ended question include Internet access, use of e-mail, a quiet place to study, a place to socialize with friends, group projects, study models for anatomy and physiology, and use of the copy machine.

When students were asked to give only *one* reason (as compared to all that apply) that accounted for most of their use almost 40 percent (38.8%) indicated classroom assignments requiring a computer while another 23 percent responded with general studying. Thirteen percent of the respondents indicated personal use of the computers as their primary reason for using the ACTT Center while eight percent indicated tutorial assistance. Still another seven percent indicated testing and makeup work.

Does the Center Support Academic Courses?

Overall, 97 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement that the ACTT Center provides support for their academic courses. This is not surprising given the large numbers of students who primarily visit the Center for classroom assignments and the use of class-related materials (a combined 44%) as well as testing and makeup work (7%), tutorial assistance (8%), and Regents' exam remediation (1%). Moreover, the ambiance of the Center lends itself to studying to include individual and group work which explains why almost 23 percent of the respondents indicated that general studying was their major usage of the Center. Usage of the Center is underscored further by the high percentage of students (50%) indicating that they spend 1 to 5 hours in the Center each week. Over a ten-week quarter the cumulative amount of time is considerable. Clearly, the Center is a great concept that is integral to campus life. Usage indicates that it works exceptionally well for a large majority of students.

Perceptions of the ACTT Center

Percentages for very adequate, adequate, and inadequate are calculated on totals that do not include no opinion responses. Thus percentages are based only on those students who actually have an opinion on the service. This gives an indication that they (or someone they talked with) have used the service at least once. Remarkably, students rated every dimension on

the survey at or above 84% when very adequate and adequate responses were summed. Overall, this indicates a high level of student satisfaction with the Center.

The *top five* dimensions that students looked most favorably upon as indicated by the ***highest percent of very adequate*** responses include (a sum of very adequate plus adequate responses are shown parenthetically)

Computer software - 47% (97%)
Computer hardware - 46% (98%)
Materials for the Regents' Exam - 45% (98%) (740 of the respondents had no opinion about this)
Quality of the assistance of the ACTT personnel - 44% (95%)
Quality of the tutorial assistance - 42% (93%)

Dimensions that received the *highest percentage of inadequate* responses include (a sum of very adequate plus adequate responses are shown parenthetically)

Availability of computers - 16% (84%)
Quality of computer assistance - 12% (88%)
Availability of tutorial assistance - 11% (90%)
Quality of the tutorial assistance - 7% (93%)
Condition of AV materials - 6% (95%)

Survey data indicates a high level of satisfaction (97% VA + A) with the computer hardware and software that are available through the Center. However, a relatively large number of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the availability of computers (16%). This negative perception of some of the visitors is likely tied to an interest in using the computers during peak demand periods when availability may be limited (e.g. 8 AM to 1 PM).

Another observation from the perception dimensions is that a large number of students perceive that the quality of the assistance they receive from the ACTT Center in general (44%) and for tutorial help (42%) is very adequate. Conversely, a relatively high percentage of those who had opinions felt that the quality (12%) and availability (11%) of tutorial assistance was inadequate as was the quality of the computer assistance (12%) although the majority of students express adequate to very adequate satisfaction with the assistance (88% to 95%).

Since student comments were so exceptionally positive about the specific labs (open daily until 5 or 6 PM) and the full-time professionals who operate them, it is safe to assume that most of the dissatisfaction is directed towards the personnel, also full-time professionals, at the front desk and at the student tutors who assist there weekday evenings (4 to 10 PM) and on weekend afternoons. This variance in ratings is easily understood. When a student goes in the Math Lab they ask a math person a math question. The same can be said for all the other specific labs. Those working at the front desk are asked questions about everything. Their expertise may be English but they are asked about the statistics Minitab program or a detailed biology question. There are over 250 different programs available on the computers. All main desk personnel, professional or student, have expertise in many of these programs and specific subject areas. It is not feasible to have assistance available in all these programs and all subject areas. Most of the

tutorial expertise is concentrated in the areas for which most students request assistance - English and mathematics - and there is less round-the-clock help in other subjects.

It is important to remember that those some students who seek help (because they may have not been helping themselves) are grossly underprepared and desperately lost with severe conceptual problems. They often possess unrealistic expectations that someone can "magically" bail them out of academic trouble. In any event, when a staff member cannot be as helpful as a student wishes, the service provider should politely explain the limitation of the tutoring services to counter negative impressions and attempt to direct the student to the faculty in charge of the course or some other source of assistance.

Since the Center advertises its tutoring services, it is in a precarious position, especially during the off-hour periods, in that students anticipate help with any course concern they might have at any time of the day. This is probably an unrealistic level of service, but considering the student response to this perceived problem, it is worth exploring ways that the Center can deliver expanded tutoring services during all time periods, or perhaps more realistically, consider ways of better defining and describing the available tutorial services. There is a need to clarify the Center's advertisement by placing emphasis on the great amount of tutorial assistance which is available but making patrons more aware that tutorial assistance is not available in every subject the entire 79 hours the Center is open.

In addition, those at the front desk, regardless of the day or time of day, do not appear, at least to a few students, to be uniformly trained about or inclined towards handling computer class-related software applications and hardware problems. This appearance relates directly to the staggering amount these personnel are increasingly asked to master. The expectation is for the Center staff and peer tutors to become quickly expert in the use of a never-ending stream of new hardware and software. The Center offers an on-going training program that attempts to deal with this basically unsolvable problem. Many students find computers rather intimidating, and it often takes hours of use to reach a comfort zone with some applications. Faculty who require the use of computer applications need to take some measure of responsibility for student confusion so that the Center does not have to bear the full burden of responsibility. Faculty should let their students know that the Center's staff cannot solve all of the application related problem that arise.

There are many variables that impact on the students' satisfaction concerning the help they receive. The mix of factors that students experience affects the outcome they express on a survey instrument. Variables include the difficulty of the subject matter, the amount of help needed, the expertise of the tutor and the ability of the tutor to articulate concepts and explain problems, the number of staff during peak demand periods, the time of day which impacts how stretched the staff might be and the ease at which they can be accessed by students, the enthusiasm, patience, and friendliness of the individual(s) providing the assistance, the disposition of the student, and the willingness of the students to at least partially solve their own problems without an overreliance on tutoring guidance. One negative encounter can in some cases cancel out several positive ones. In general, consumers of any service are more forgiving of perceived shortcomings if they believe the providers are sincerely concerned about their welfare.

Comments from Student Survey

Two open-ended questions were in the comments section of the survey: (1) Please indicate ways you think the ACTT Center could improve, and (2) Please make comments or suggestions about any specific lab (Writing, Speech, Business, Math, CFLAC (Foreign Languages)). Often open-ended responses are insightful into the real issues that concern students the most. The only caution is that they serve as an area for venting frustrations and negative perceptions even when a student's overall rating of a given service may be very high. Thus it is important to remember that 97 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement that the ACTT Center provides support for their academic courses, and that no survey dimension in the Perceptions of the ACTT Center section received less than an 84 percent positive rating (very adequate plus adequate). The Center cannot be all things to all people since there are limits on available resources that constrain what the Center can deliver (e.g. group studying involves some noise as students share information, some time periods are more crowded than others, problems arising from heavy usage underscore the popularity of the facility, only so much money for tutors, computer upgrade budgets, only so much floor space).

Responses to the open-ended questions were divided into categories reflecting the range of student issues associated with the Center. Representative responses for these two dimensions used to develop the discussion below appear in the appendix.

Ways the Center Can Improve

Hours of Operation: Currently, the generous hours (79 per week) of operation are 7:30-10 M-Th, 7:30-4:30 F, 12-6 Sa, 1-7 Su. Quite a few students comments expressed an interest in expanding the hours of Center operation so that it opened at 7 AM on weekdays and remained open until ll PM at night. Comments also indicated an interest in expanded hours on both Saturday and Sunday (as early as 10 AM and as late as 9 PM).

Noise and Other Distractions: Many students perceive that the Center is too often used as a site on campus for socializing rather than studying and voice an interest in noise suppression guidelines that would make the atmosphere more library-like. However, all campuses need different study environments since there are varying learning styles. The ACTT Center has never attempted to create a library-like atmosphere since the college already has a library for those needing that type study environment. The noise complaints will hopefully diminish as the Center more clearly defines its purpose.

Rules for Computer Use: Students resent the use of computers for personal reasons such as the use of e-mail, chatting, and game-playing when they are trying to use them for academic assignments during peak demand times, presumably the morning hours during the week. Moreover, students find the socializing that occurs between computer stations to be distracting, especially if it is not assignment related. They suggest imposing limits on the use of the computers for non-classroom assignments and the possibility of implementing a sign-up sheet so that students can reserve the computers for a fixed length of time during high-demand periods. Another suggestion is to set aside a few computers for use as e-mail locations or Internet access.

Chatting and game-playing have been greatly reduced since the implementation of the new game and chat policy winter quarter. During the morning rush a staff member monitors the main computing area and assists students.

Computers, Printers, and Software (97% VA +A): A large number of comments expressed the perceived need to upgrade existing 486 computers to the significantly faster Pentium-grade machines. Then too, many students expressed a need for more computers to meet the heavy demand that occurs during the hours from 8 AM to 1 PM. Students do not like to wait in line to get on a computer. Many students commented that the printers in the Center are painfully slow and of poor quality. Several students suggested the purchase of laser printers. Students also complained that at least some of the software packages available to them are out-of-date and need to be upgraded (e.g. WordPerfect, business presentation software). All of these upgrade problems are being continually addressed by the Office of Computing and Information Technology.

Facility: The Center is perceived as overcrowded and students commented on the need for more tables, more chairs, more study areas, more room for testing, and more rooms. Although there are obvious floor space constraints within Academic III, the idea of expanding the Center has merit. This problem will worsen as the College's enrollment escalates upward over the next several years. Several students mentioned that the headsets are in poor condition and that the lab sometimes is too cold. One student suggested putting partitions between the computer work-stations for greater privacy.

Assistance in General: A relatively large number of comments insisted that the staff in general needs to be friendlier and more understanding when students request assistance. Some respondents do not perceive that the staff makes a sincere enough effort to be helpful. Students express their frustration when their questions go unanswered. Several students suggested that the staff should "roam" the Center looking for students to help rather than remain anchored to their desk. As will be seen in a later section this perception does not extend, for the most part, to those who work within the specific labs. When reading these comments one needs to keep in mind the vastness of what is expected of ACTT Center staff as was pointed out several times previously. Also, one needs to remember the incredible number of students using the Center and the strains those huge numbers cause on the limited staff.

Tutorial Assistance (93% VA +A): There is a perceived need for more qualified tutors, especially during peak demand periods and in the evening and on weekends. Students also suggest that at least some of the tutors are not particularly friendly or genuinely interested in helping with problems. Some respondents comment that tutors are not eager to help. A relatively large number of students mentioned the lack of help with Minitab and the more general need for tutors to have an in-depth knowledge of discipline-specific subject matter (e.g. chemistry, statistics, math, biology, physics, and anatomy and physiology). Since most of the comments about the specific labs were positive, one is led to think that the comments in this section were primarily directed at the front desk staff and student tutors who have expertise in certain areas but not the particular area in which the student needs assistance.

Computer Assistance (87.5 % VA + A): Many comments suggested that there is a lack of adequate assistance within the Center on the use of computers. Suggestions to improve this situation include: (1) making available more trained individuals to help students with the

computers and printers and with the various software packages (e.g. Minitab, WordPerfect, Internet access), (2) providing an easy-to-identify assistant for the computer area who occasionally walks around to see if anyone needs help, (3) posting written and indexed instructions at the workstations on the operation of the computers and information about various software applications, and (4) offering an introductory course on computers and the Internet at the beginning of each quarter.

Comments about Specific Labs

ACTT in General: General comments about the labs were overwhelmingly positive. The labs are perceived as helpful and very useful. A student suggested the need for a sign in the ACTT Center detailing the function of each lab and its location within the Center. A few respondents were not aware that the labs existed.

Business Lab: The business lab is perceived by students as an excellent site for valuable help in dealing with their classroom assignments. Ms. Booker was mentioned by students as "great," "outstanding," "wonderful," and "very helpful." Several respondents noted that they did better in accounting because of the tutoring they received from the lab. There is a perceived need for more tutoring opportunities in the evening.

Foreign Languages Lab: Although most visitors to the lab report a very positive and helpful experience, several students felt that their needs were not met. Some students indicated that the lab needs to be open for longer hours during the evening and on weekends. Several students noted that the facility is crowded at times and that some of the equipment needs updating. One student suggested more duplicates of the Spanish audio cassettes.

Writing Lab: Mr. Sherwood was cited by several students as an excellent tutor. There were fewer comments about this lab than any other, but all the comments were positive.

Speech Lab: The Speech Lab is perceived by most respondents as very helpful. The survey indicated an interest in longer hours of operation.

Mathematics Lab: Delbert Greear was mentioned by quite a few of the respondents as an "exceptionally helpful" teacher who does a "fantastic" job explaining problems and who is "always there to help." Several students expressed a need for more tutors in the lab.

Faculty/Staff Survey - Spring 1996

The Academic Computing, Tutoring, and Testing (ACTT) Center

Respondent Profile

The current survey was the first to evaluate the ACTT Center. It was distributed to all faculty, staff, and administrators across campus in May of 1996. Results were returned to OPIR and the data was compiled and analyzed. Seventy-nine individuals contributed to the spring of 1996 ACTT Center survey. Of those, 63 percent (n = 50) were faculty, 14 percent (n = 11) administrative, and 23 percent (n = 18) staff. The divisions of Humanities and Mathematics and Computer Science each accounted for 15 percent of the respondents with Science and Technology and Social Sciences close behind at 13 percent each. The Business division and the areas of Student Development and Administrative Services each contributed eight percent of the total respondents. Of the remaining areas, the most significant contributor was Academic Services with the rest of the respondents from Physical Education (4%), Fine Arts (5%), and Extended Learning (5%).

Survey Analysis

Percentages for very adequate, adequate, and inadequate were calculated only for the respondents who had an opinion. Those who had no opinion for a given survey item were excluded from these percentages and tallied separately. Summing very adequate and adequate responses into a percent positive score gives rates on every dimension except one (photocopy condition) at or above 94. Sixteen of the 38 (42%) dimensions received percent positive ratings of 100. Since extremely high percent positive ratings do not differentiate the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Center, they are not used to discuss the survey data. Instead, the analysis emphasizes variations in very adequate percentages. Even still the ratings, in general, were very good. For example, fully 28 of the 38 (74%) dimensions very adequate ratings in excess of 60 percent with 11 of 38 (29%) at or above 70 percent. Only three dimensions had very adequate ratings below 50 percent: condition of photocopy equipment (43%), amount of tutoring staff (45%), and amount and variety of tutoring materials (48%). These exceptional perceptions of the Center and its staff are remarkable.

The ACTT Center in General

Perceptions concerning the ACTT Center in general were overwhelmingly positive. Seventy-five percent of the respondents rated the following four dimensions very adequate: willingness to help special needs students (76%), willingness of the staff to discuss problems (80%), hours of operation (81%), and willingness to offer orientation classes (82%). Clearly, faculty and staff are impressed with the efforts of the Center personnel to extend themselves to the student and faculty community through generous hours, a willingness to address problems, and to work closely with those with special needs.

Although the Center is only going into its second year of operation, the concept is extremely popular, and the Center appears to be highly effective in reaching out to and significantly touching the academic lives of students. This popularity has come at a price in that the

Center can barely keep pace with the demand for its services. During peak usage periods, the Center's staff is stretched thin, and the facility is severely strained. As a result, it is not surprising that the two of the three lowest very adequate responses about the ACTT Center in general were directed towards the amount of staff (52%) and the availability of professional staff (56%). The lowest very adequate rating went to the condition of the photocopy equipment (43%).

Testing Services and Instructional Support

Respondents looked favorably on the testing services and the instructional support offered by the Center. Although only one dimension scored a very adequate response rating in excess of 70 percent, almost all respondents felt that the services were at least adequate: quality of assistance to me for testing (72% very adequate), quality of assistance to students (67% very adequate), and availability of materials for my classroom (61% very adequate). Two of the respondents (3%) felt that the testing area was inadequate. The lowest very adequate percentage went to the security of the testing area (57%). There is some faculty concern that security could be a little tighter as students take make-up tests in the Center. A respondent commented that one of their students cheated when the Center first opened while taking a make-up test. Students must obtain their tests from the front desk and take the test in a 9-seat glass-enclosed room that is under TV surveillance and within easy visual range of staff working at the front desk. This testing situation is adequate (41%) to very adequate (57%) for the great majority of faculty. Perhaps, security could be somewhat improved if a staff member occasionally walked through the testing room. For practical reasons, it is likely that security precautions will never satisfy all faculty. Although high school and college reports indicate that student cheating is common, one must to a certain extent lean on the integrity of students before creating a prison-like environment devoid of any trust or expecting the Center's staff to go to extraordinary lengths to police the testing area.

Tutorial Services and Labs (Writing, Math, Business, Speech, and Foreign Language)

The highest very adequate ratings in this area went to the knowledge level of tutors (63%), the quality of the assistance of the tutorial staff (68%), and the willingness of the staff to offer tutoring help (73%). Faculty are pleased with the adequacy of the Center to provide tutoring services to students across a range of topic areas. Nevertheless, the crucial need for additional tutoring help on campus is underscored by the relatively low very adequate ratings for the amount of tutoring staff (45%), the amount and variety of tutoring materials (48%), and the availability of staff for tutoring (53%). Overall, almost 60 percent of the respondents with an opinion felt that the tutoring services of the lab are very adequate with the remainder stating that they are adequate. Two or three individuals felt that the Center was inadequate in providing sufficient tutors (n = 3) and in the subject areas for tutoring (n = 2). Several faculty commented on the need for science tutors. It is interesting to note that on any given dimension in this section that 28 to 35 percent (n = 22 to 28) of the respondents had no opinion concerning the Center. This represents a fairly large percentage of faculty and staff who are not familiar enough with the Center's operation or in need of its resources to evaluate its tutoring services.

Computing Services and Technology Workshops

Faculty and staff appear to appreciate the Center's efforts over the past year to offer technology workshops and are impressed with their quality. Seventy-one percent of the respondents felt that the number of workshops offered was very adequate and almost 80 percent (78%) felt that they were of high quality. Faculty and staff give high marks to the willingness of the staff to help with computers (73% very adequate) and the quality of the computer assistance (73% very adequate). The Center, however, should develop ways to increase the amount of staff for assistance with computers in that the lowest very adequate responses were directed towards its availability (63%). Moreover, only 62 percent of the respondents with opinions felt that the availability of open access computers was very adequate. This likely reflects the obvious and documented crowding of the Center's computer workstations during peak demand periods by students. As was the case in other areas of the survey, it is remarkable and a tribute to the Center that only one or two respondents felt that any of the seven dimensions in this area were inadequate.

Audio Visual Services

Overall, faculty and staff perceived that the Center provided staff knowledgeable in the use of audio visual equipment (67% very adequate) and were appreciative of the quality of the assistance they received (63% very adequate). The two lowest very adequate responses were the condition of the audio visual equipment (55%) and the availability of special equipment for students (60%). Only one or two respondents felt that the audio visual services of the Center were inadequate indicating that the needs of the majority are being met in this area.

Times that Use the Center

When asked to check all the times of usage that apply, faculty and staff indicated that the prime times occur during the weekdays between 8 AM and 1 PM (n = 43) and from 1 PM to 4 PM (n = 34). Faculty and staff also use the Center from 4 PM to 8 PM on weekdays (n = 17). Far fewer faculty and staff use the facility after 8 PM on weekdays (n = 6) and on Saturdays (n = 7) and Sundays (n = 6).

Comments from Faculty/Staff Survey

Responses to the open-ended questions were divided into categories reflecting the range of faculty and staff issues associated with the Center. Most of the comments are discussed in the context of the discussion and a sampling of those from faculty and staff is not provided in the appendix.

Student Performance Improved Because of ACTT Center: Of those who commented on the question, almost all replied with an emphatic yes. Respondents went on to indicate that some students might drop out of college without the Center's services, that the accounting program has benefitted greatly with increased student success, and that there appears to be a direct correlation between participation in the tutoring labs of the Center and class grades.

Comments About a Specific Lab: Several faculty indicated a need for tutoring in science (e.g. a physics tutor). The math lab received high praise from several respondents. One respondent noted how crowded the facility is at peak demand periods and suggested expanding the Foreign Language lab and the main floor area. A respondent suggested that the writing lab be set up in a separate area since its students are often distracted by the traffic of other students in the Center. One respondent disliked the unavailability of the Mac lab during speech lab even when no students are being tutored.

Ways to Improve Computer Services: Faculty and staff suggested the following: staff need to be more open and friendly with students, occasionally the night-time staff fails to provide adequate assistance to students, add a classroom for technology presentations, put faster computers behind the desk for color printing, maintain ACTT Center Saturday hours so that they overlap with scheduled classes (i.e. open ACTT Center by 8:30 AM on Saturday), minimize the recreational uses of computers, and offer workshops for students on the use of e-mail and the Internet.

Areas of the ACTT Center that Should be Improved: Several respondents stressed the need for additional computers, printers, and color printing. A respondent suggested that the photocopy and slide show equipment be improved. A respondent suggested better qualified tutors and two respondents indicated a need for science tutors. Several respondents suggested expanding the areas set aside for speech, testing, and writing. One respondent encouraged the Center to extend its hours of operation. Lastly, a respondent suggested the purchase of English composition software for organizing, developing, writing expositions.

Services that Should be Changed: Several suggestions include: vacuum at times that distract as few students as possible, need more science tutors, student aides are not sufficiently trained, expansion of the testing area, schedule some workshops in the evening and on weekends, and consider doing student workshops on the use of certain software applications.

Commendations: There were more comments to this survey item than any other and all the responses were overwhelmingly positive. Across the board, survey respondents view the Center as an "excellent," "well-managed," and "state-of-the-art" resource. The "fantastic" staff possess "positive and patient attitudes" and do an "outstanding job especially considering the number of students that they have to deal with." Praise was given for the openness of the facility, the "helpfulness" of its "overworked" staff, and the plentiful computers. Several respondents commented on how much students appreciate the resource and that it is the envy of other schools.

Appendix

Student Comments
Representative Sample

Indicate Ways the Center Could Improve

General Comments

Change the name.
Have more incoming modem lines so that the computers can be more easily accessed from home.
I think the chat and game-playing policy should be relaxed.

Hours of Operation

The ACTT Center needs to stay open until 11 PM.
Be open later especially during final exams.
I wish the ACTT Center would have earlier hours on the weekend. Even 10 AM would benefit many students.
Open earlier in the day.
Open earlier on the weekends.
Open later in the evening and the weekend.
7 AM opening would be nice for students who go to work after class and cannot return on the weekend because they live to far away.
I wish the ACTT Center would stay open until 9 PM on Sunday.
Continue to stay open on the weekends.
I think the ACTT Center should be open at 7 AM.
Longer hours for night students.
Longer hours on the weekends.

Noise and Other Distractions

Too much talking and playing in the study area.
Too much socializing allowed.
Too noisy for studying.
The noise is so loud at times that you cannot get anything done.
People who are not using the computers should shut up and go somewhere else.
The cleaning people vacuum when I am studying. It's very disturbing and noisy.
Students like to congregate in the Center and talk. It should have more of a library-like atmosphere. There should be rules about noise. This would make the Center more conducive to studying.
Discourage students from using the Center as a social lounge.
Kick out those who are loud and obnoxious.
The noise of the computers is distracting to study.

Rules for Computer Use

Be stricter on students who are just playing games on the computers and preventing others from doing their work.
Cut down on the people who sit at the computers just to socialize with someone next to them.
Limit those who use the computers for non-classroom assignments.
Have a certain time limit that students can use the computers. Have a sign-up sheet that students can use to reserve a computer so that they do not have to wait so long.
Maybe set aside a few computers to use for e-mail because a lot of times I go in to use the computer and many people are using e-mail or the Internet.
Computers are frequently tied up for recreational purposes.
There should not be a faculty computer.

Computers, Printers, and Software

The ACTT Center needs more and faster computers.

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Computers are too slow.
Need more up-to-date software.
Computers need to be more available, especially between 10 AM and 12N. Every time I go there all of the computers are taken and there are several people in line to use them.
Add new software and upgrade existing applications (e.g. business, presentation packages, psychology).
Need better printers that are faster and easier to read. Consider laser printers and color inkjets.
Upgrade Word Perfect.
The printers are extremely slow and the quality is poor.
Upgrade the 486's to Pentiums.
We need better business presentations software.

Facility
Need more tables.
Please continue to allow students to snack at the study tables.
Enlarge the study area.
Need to have better and more headphones in the audio visual room.
More rooms.
More seating.
Expand the facility.
Hang wall paper.
It is very cold in there.
More privacy when using the computers. Perhaps partitions between stations.
More quiet work rooms.
Need more room for testing.
There needs to be more importance put on the Mac lab (better computers, Internet access, more up-to-date graphics software)

Assistance in General
The ACTT Center advertises that students are their first concern and want to help. But I have noticed every time I go in and ask a question, they seem irritated or disgusted. They should follow what they advertise..friendliness.
The student workers could be a little nicer and offer to help in a nice way.
The tutors and all the personnel make you feel as though you are making them go out of their way to help. This occurs with every dealing I've had with them.
They need to get off their butts and do something behind the desk.
The employees could be more personable.
More understanding people.
Need friendlier people.
Need a desk for general assistance.
Staff needs to have more patience with students.
Last quarter there was not enough assistance between 8 AM and 9 AM.
At peak times, need more helpers.
Often staff cannot fully answer student questions.
Could use more individual help.
Get people who know what they are doing. Every time I ask a question you get the answer "I do not know." If they don't know, why are they there?
Be sure trained staff is available during all the open hours.
Improvement in the attitude of the assistants.
Have people to assist you that don't act like it's a bother. They seem to resent having to help with anything.
Personnel should roam around the Center instead of just sitting back behind the desk eating, drinking, talking on the phone, etc. What help are they to the students?
I think the ACTT personnel at the front desk need to have more patience and a better attitude. I have been treated as though they had better things to do than help me.

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Tutorial Assistance

I have waited in the math lab and been ignored.
People should be friendlier and willing to help.
Add to English and math staff.
Tutors should be more friendly and act like they want to help instead of coming across like they have to help you because it's just a job.
Tutors should walk around and ask if we need help. They should show more interest.
It's hard for tutors to help more than a couple of people.
When I went in for tutorial assistance in Math 151, the lady there was more interested in socializing with a gentlemen than she was in giving assistance. She told me on more than one occasion that she didn't know how to work the problems I was having trouble with.
The staff needs to be able to help students with Minitab. They do not know much and just gave me a book that did not help much.
If I have a question, please go the extra mile and help me rather than sending me off on my own.
People that work there should know how to use the accounting software.
Need more assistance on how to use Minitab and need workshops on how to use the Internet.
Improve the level of student assistance. They need to know a larger variety of subjects.
Have more helpful staff and more than one tutorial assistant.
More people to tutor students in biology and history.
More tutors.
More tutors for Math 104.
Need more help in physics, biology, and chemistry.
Need more qualified tutors in the evening hours.
Need more math tutors.
I think the tutors should be more eager and helpful.
Get more tutors for the weekends.
Have someone who can tutor anatomy and physiology.
Have more student tutors.
They can learn about Minitab and Presentations for Windows so the students can be helped.
Have more tutorial hours during the weekday nights.
Increase the number of tutors.
More math tutors.
Have more tutorial assistance. I feel that they are so busy that they can't take the necessary time to help students.
Math lab does not help. Need more tutors.
Maybe add a science lab so students can receive assistance in chemistry, physics, and biology.
More solutions manuals (e.g. chemistry).

Computer Assistance

The quality of the computer assistance is poor.
Offer a basic introductory course to computers and the Internet at the beginning of each quarter.
In visiting the ACTT, the staff made me feel like I was a total stupid person because I have very little knowledge of computers.
More assistance on the computers. More assistants trained in the use of different software programs.
More people knowledgeable of Mac computers to tutor students.
Written instruction booklets, diagrams, and key coding for every two computers.
Educate the workers on how to use the statistics programs, math/science programs, etc.
Have ACTT Center staff trained in all programs that students use, e.g. Minitab for Statistics 200.
Better assistance for Minitab. No one knows how to use it.
Many ACTT Center personnel do not know how to use the computers.
Have an assistant just for computers. They should just 'float' around during peak periods. If you're not experienced with computers it is very difficult to complete assignments.
Have a computer assistant all through the week. A lot of times no one is experienced to help on the computer on Mondays and Wednesdays.

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The computer assistance could improve.
Have general instructions available for using software and hardware.
Better assistance with the computers.
I would appreciate more explicit instructions about how to use the computers.
Have more people on hand when there are problems with the computers and printers.

Comments About Specific Labs

ACTT Center Labs in General
All the labs are very helpful and very useful.
All of the labs are great.
Assistants should help first timers more instead of talking among themselves.
Better audio visual equipment, especially headsets.
Everything is wonderful.
Need to more friendly and more helpful.
More science tutoring.
Need a sheet posted in the ACTT Center that explains all the labs and where they are located.
Those people do a terrific job.

Business Lab
Accounting tutoring is very helpful.
Excellent tutoring.
Could use more help in the evenings.
I could not handle coursework without the business lab tutoring.
The business lab is a great place to do any work that has been assigned.
Big huge help - I love it!
Great for accounting.
Mrs. Booker is great.
Ms. Booker is outstanding.
Wonderful and very helpful.
Need business tutors available at night for accounting.
I would not do well in accounting if not for the business lab.

Foreign Languages Lab
Needs newer, better equipment.
Hours are inadequate for people who work. If assignments are going to require five hours of use, then the lab should be open for working people.
Great.
Needs longer hours in the evenings at least two days a week.
There is not enough space for all the students taking foreign languages.
Open more hours during the evenings and on weekends.
Helpful.
One person in the lab is rude and condescending when asked a question.
Enjoyed the different and exciting videos and computer programs.
Everyone there helped me a lot for three quarters.
Wish the lab was open on Sunday, but I understand why it is not.
Personnel could be more attentive and helpful to the students.
Good tutors.
Spanish lab needs more duplicates of audio cassettes.
Exceptionally helpful.

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Writing Lab
Frank Sherwood is one of the best English tutors. He helps a lot.
Writing lab helped to write my English 102 term paper and I did well.
Writing lab is wonderful.
Mr. Sherwood was very good.

Speech Lab
Lab is great.
If the main teacher is out, be sure to have an adequate replacement.
Tremendous.
Big help.
Very helpful.
Needs more hours.
Speech tapes are stupid.
Really helped me prepare better speeches.
Lab never helped me.

Math Lab
The math lab is very helpful during tutorial sessions.
The math lab needs another printer. It is extremely slow.
Another math lab helper is needed so it won't be so crowded.
Delbert Greer. Delbert Greer. Delbert Greer... - extremely helpful, don't ever let him go, very exceptional, fantastic for helping explain problems, does a great job, teacher is great, very helpful, wonderful, great tutor and is always there to help, great tutor and helped me through Math 151 and 152, we love Delbert.
Another math lab tutor is needed to help Delbert.
Math lab is understaffed. Need more instructors, more tutors, one is not enough.
The room is too cold.
Need to learn Minitab.
Great when you need help.
Lots of great help.
Wonderful, very helpful.

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ACTT Center Student Survey
Spring 1996
Gainesville College

Dr. Hamilton, OPIR

PART I: Background Information

	n	%N	N
1 Gender			
1 Female	685	62.5	
2 Male	411	37.5	1096
2 Age			
1 24 or below	819	74.8	
2 25 or above	276	25.2	1095
3 Attend classes			
1 Day	652	59.9	
2 Evening	338	31.1	
3 Day and evening	98	9.0	1088

PART II: Use of the ACTT Center

	n	%N	N
4 Ever been in ACTT Center			
1 No	95	8.7	
2 Yes	1001	91.3	1096
5 Hours per week in ACTT			
1 less than 1	400	40.1	
2 1-5	497	49.8	
3 6-10	70	7.0	
4 more than 10	31	3.1	998
6 When use the ACTT Center (All that apply)			
1 Before 8 am weekdays	108		
2 8 am - 1 pm weekdays	605		
3 1 pm - 4 pm weekdays	276		
4 4 pm - 8 pm weekdays	316		
5 After 8 pm weekdays	180		
6 Saturday, 12 N - 6 pm	217		
7 Sunday, 1 pm - 7 pm	218		
7 Which time do you use most often			
1 Before 8 am weekdays	30	3.0	
2 8 am - 1 pm weekdays	501	50.5	
3 1 pm - 4 pm weekdays	128	12.9	
4 4 pm - 8 pm weekdays	173	17.4	
5 After 8 pm weekdays	75	7.6	
6 Saturday, 12 N - 6 pm	44	4.4	
7 Sunday, 1 pm - 7 pm	42	4.2	993
8 Why use ACTT (All that apply)			
1 Classroom assignments with computer	759		
2 Personal use of computer	471		
3 Assignments that require ACTT material	310		
4 Testing and makeup work	468		
5 Remediation of Regents' Exam	48		
6 Tutorial assistance	293		
7 General studying	569		
8 Other	71		

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9	**Primary reason for using ACTT**			
	1 Classroom assignments with computer	388	38.8	
	2 Personal use of computer	127	12.7	
	3 Assignments that require ACTT material	53	5.3	
	4 Testing and makeup work	73	7.3	
	5 Remediation of Regents' Exam	14	1.4	
	6 Tutorial assistance	80	8.0	
	7 General studying	229	22.9	
	8 Other	37	3.7	1001
10	**ACTT provided support for your academic courses**			
	1 Yes	826	96.7	
	2 No	28	3.3	854
	3 No opinion	140		

PART III. Perceptions of ACTT Center

	Very Adequate		Adequate		Inadequate		Total		No Opinion	VA+A	
	n	%N	n	%N	n	%N	N	%N	n	n	%N
11 Materials for Regents' Exam	115	45.1	136	53.3	4	1.6	255	100.0	740	251	98.4
12 Computer hardware	412	46.1	460	51.5	21	2.4	893	100.0	103	872	97.6
13 Computer software	395	47.2	418	50.0	23	2.8	836	100.0	160	813	97.2
14 Materials for course work	294	39.4	434	58.2	18	2.4	746	100.0	250	728	97.6
15 Quality of AV materials	207	38.8	307	57.5	20	3.7	534	100.0	432	514	96.3
16 Condition of AV materials	193	34.4	337	60.1	31	5.5	561	100.0	435	530	94.5
17 Availability of computers	269	29.9	482	53.6	148	16.5	899	100.0	97	751	83.5
18 Quality of computer assistance	285	35.1	425	52.4	101	12.5	811	100.0	185	710	87.5
19 Availability of tutorial assistance	247	36.5	358	53.0	71	10.5	676	100.0	320	605	89.5
20 Quality of tutorial assistance	266	41.8	327	51.4	43	6.8	636	100.0	360	593	93.2
21 Availability of AV materials	175	34.6	305	60.3	26	5.1	506	100.0	490	480	94.9
22 Quality of assistance in use of AV materials	172	35.8	284	59.0	25	5.2	481	100.0	515	456	94.8
23 Quality of assistance of the ACTT personnel	374	43.6	442	51.6	41	4.8	857	100.0	139	816	95.2

PART IV. Comments

1 Indicate ways Center can improve

2 Comments about specific labs

24	**Why not ever used ACTT Center**	n	%N	N
	1 Never heard of ACTT Center	8	8.5	
	2 No time for ACTT Center	42	44.7	
	3 Never needed ACTT services	31	33.0	
	4 Other	13	13.8	94

ACTT Center Faculty/Staff Survey
Spring 1996
Gainesville College

Dr. Hamilton, OPIR

PART I: Employment Information

		n	%N	N
1	**Status**			
1	Faculty	50	63.3	
2	Administrator	11	13.9	
3	Staff	18	22.8	79
2	**Cost Center**			
1	Business	6	7.9	
2	Fine Arts	4	5.3	
3	Humanities	11	14.5	
4	Social Sciences	10	13.2	
5	Physical Education	3	3.9	
6	Extended Learning	4	5.3	
7	Math and Computer Science	11	14.5	
8	Science and Technology	10	13.2	
9	Student Development	6	7.9	
10	Academic Services	5	6.6	
11	Administrative Services	6	7.9	76

PART II: Perceptions of the ACTT Center

		Very Adequate		Adequate		Inadequate		Total		No Opinion	VA+A	
		n	%N	n	%N	n	%N	N	%N	n	n	%N
A.	**The ACTT Center in General**											
1	Conduciveness to academic pursuits	48	66.7	23	31.9	1	1.4	72	100.0	6	71	98.6
2	Hours	59	80.8	12	16.4	2	2.7	73	100.0	5	71	97.3
3	Amount of staffing	35	51.5	33	48.5	0	0.0	68	100.0	10	68	100.0
4	Availability of professional staff	40	56.3	28	39.4	3	4.2	71	100.0	7	68	95.8
5	Willingness of staff to discuss problems	53	80.3	13	19.7	0	0.0	66	100.0	11	66	100.0
6	Willingness to offer orientation classes	40	81.6	9	18.4	0	0.0	49	100.0	29	49	100.0
7	Quality of orientation	31	70.5	13	29.5	0	0.0	44	100.0	34	44	100.0
8	Handicap accessibility	31	67.4	15	32.6	0	0.0	46	100.0	32	46	100.0
9	Condition of photocopy equipment	12	42.9	12	42.9	4	14.3	28	100.0	50	24	85.7
10	Willingness to help special need students	38	76.0	12	24.0	0	0.0	50	100.0	28	50	100.0
11	Overall services	53	72.6	20	27.4	0	0.0	73	100.0	5	73	100.0

		Very Adequate		Adequate		Inadequate		Total		No Opinion	VA+A	
		n	%N	n	%N	n	%N	N	%N	n	n	%N
B.	**Testing Services and Instructional Support**											
1	Adequacy of testing area	39	63.9	20	32.8	2	3.3	61	100.0	18	59	96.7
2	Security of tests	33	56.9	24	41.4	1	1.7	58	100.0	21	57	98.3
3	Quality of assistance to me for testing	42	72.4	16	27.6	0	0.0	58	100.0	21	58	100.0
4	Quality of assistance to students for testin	35	67.3	17	32.7	0	0.0	52	100.0	27	52	100.0
5	Availability of materials for my classroom	30	61.2	18	36.7	1	2.0	49	100.0	30	48	98.0

		Very Adequate		Adequate		Inadequate		Total		No Opinion	VA+A	
		n	%N	n	%N	n	%N	N	%N	n	n	%N
C.	**Tutorial Services and Labs (Writing, Math, Business, Speech, and Foreign Languages)**											
1	Quality of assistance by tutorial staff	38	67.9	18	32.1	0	0.0	56	100.0	22	56	100.0
2	Knowledge level in tutoring area	35	62.5	20	35.7	1	1.8	56	100.0	22	55	98.2
3	Willingness to assist for tutoring	40	72.7	14	25.5	1	1.8	55	100.0	23	54	98.2
4	Amount of tutoring staff	23	45.1	25	49.0	3	5.9	51	100.0	27	48	94.1
5	Amount and variety of tutoring materials	24	48.0	26	52.0	0	0.0	50	100.0	28	50	100.0
6	Subject areas for tutoring	30	54.5	23	41.8	2	3.6	55	100.0	23	53	96.4
7	Availability of staff for tutoring	28	52.8	25	47.2	0	0.0	53	100.0	25	53	100.0
8	Adequacy of tutoring	32	59.3	22	40.7	0	0.0	54	100.0	24	54	100.0

		Very Adequate		Adequate		Inadequate		Total		No Opinion	VA+A	
		n	%N	n	%N	n	%N	N	%N	n	n	%N
D.	**Computing Services and Technology Workshops**											
1	Availability of open access computers	38	62.3	22	36.1	1	1.6	61	100.0	16	60	98.4
2	Condition of computer equipment	47	68.1	21	30.4	1	1.4	69	100.0	8	68	98.6
3	Willingness to provide computer assistanc	49	73.1	17	25.4	1	1.5	67	100.0	10	66	98.5
4	Availability of computer assistance	41	63.1	22	33.8	2	3.1	65	100.0	12	63	96.9
5	Quality of computer assistance	48	72.7	17	25.8	1	1.5	66	100.0	11	65	98.5
6	Number of technology workshops	51	70.8	20	27.8	1	1.4	72	100.0	5	71	98.6
7	Quality of technology workshops	53	77.9	15	22.1	0	0.0	68	100.0	9	68	100.0

		Very Adequate		Adequate		Inadequate		Total		No Opinion	VA+A	
		n	%N	n	%N	n	%N	N	%N	n	n	%N
E.	**Audio/Visual (AV) Services**											
1	Availability of knowledgeable staff	28	66.7	13	31.0	1	2.4	42	100.0	35	41	97.6
2	Quality of AV assistance	26	63.4	15	36.6	0	0.0	41	100.0	36	41	100.0
3	Condition of AV equipment and materials	22	55.0	16	40.0	2	5.0	40	100.0	37	38	95.0
4	Availability of special equipment for class	29	64.4	14	31.1	2	4.4	45	100.0	32	43	95.6
5	Availability of special equipment for studen	22	59.5	15	40.5	0	0.0	37	100.0	40	37	100.0
6	Availability of overhead projectors, LCD ...	19	63.3	10	33.3	1	3.3	30	100.0	47	29	96.7
7	Condition of overhead projectors, LCD...	22	64.7	11	32.4	1	2.9	34	100.0	43	33	97.1

PART III: Comments and Suggestions

A. Student improvement as a result of tutoring

B. Comments about specific labs

C. Comments about computing services

D.	Times that use ACTT Center (All that apply)	n
1	Before 8 am weekdays	8
2	8 am - 1 pm weekdays	43
3	1 pm - 4 pm weekdays	34
4	4 pm - 8 pm weekdays	17
5	After 8 pm weekdays	6
6	Saturday, 12 N - 6 pm	7
7	Sunday, 1 pm - 7 pm	6

E. Areas that should be improved

F. Services of ACTT that should be changed

G. Commendations